

Manufacturing Innovation Insider Newsletter

Nurses Fight Chronically Dry, Sensitive Hands With New Shielding Lotions

Unlike traditional moisturizers, shielding lotions help keep out irritants such as latex allergens and anti-bacterial soaps, while locking in the skin's natural moisture

As a nurse or medical professional, you know how dry, rough, and uncomfortable your hands can get due to continual handwashing, antibacterial soaps, and the harsh realities of daily living, which rob moisture from your skin. Latex gloves, while offering protection from body fluids and disease, can also contribute to skin problems - including contact dermatitis and serious allergic reactions - especially with prolonged use.

Though less than one percent of the general population is allergic to latex, the percentage among healthcare workers is much higher - between 17 and 25 percent, according to the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Experts believe that constant latex exposure from gloves and other sources puts healthcare professionals such as nurses, dentists, and lab personnel at increased risk of latex sensitivity.

“Latex gloves are hard on the hands even for those not overly sensitive to the material,” says Jasmin Elliott, a licensed RN, who has worked in hospital and outpatient clinic environments in Southern California. “But wearing them is inevitable as a medical professional. Nearly constant handwashing takes its toll on your hands too, when washing before and after each patient interaction with several patients each hour.”

Traditional moisturizers help to a degree, but often get washed off, leaving hands dry, inflexible, or even in pain during hands-on nursing or medical work.

“The typical moisturizer comes off as soon as you wash,” says Elliott. “You put more on, and it washes



Gloves In A Bottle seals the skin to prevent the loss of your own natural moisture as well as providing additional moisture.

off again, in a vicious cycle. Or things get so busy you don't have time to reapply, and your skin suffers the consequences.”

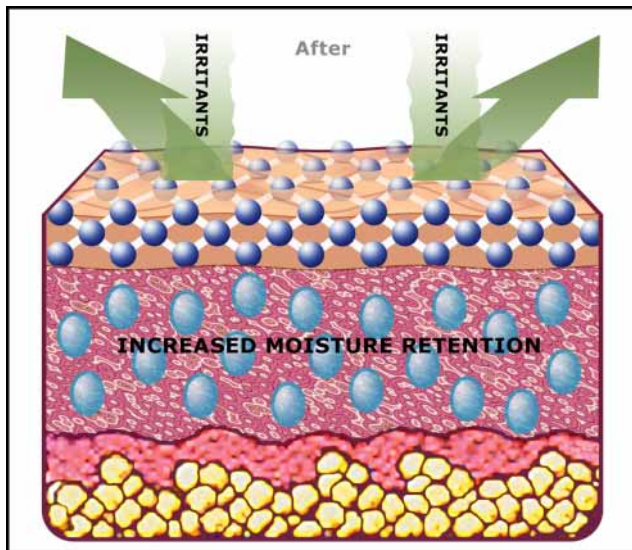
Most moisturizers suffer another serious drawback. For moisture to improve a dry skin condition, it needs to get below your second layer of skin. But the only moisture that does so is your skin's own moisture. Artificial moisturizers on the skin's surface, in fact, may actually send the wrong message – that your skin is adequately moisturized, when it's dehydrated of natural moisture. This can reduce your body's natural production of moisture and exacerbate a dry skin condition.

Nurses Fight Chronically Dry, Sensitive Hands

“I tried just about every type of lotion I could find and nothing worked,” says Sharon Thompson, a LVN at an outpatient chemotherapy clinic in Nashville, Tenn. “Many were greasy or fragranced, which is a bad fit for a medical environment where manual dexterity is critical and patient sensitivities must be taken into account. My hands became so dry and cracked that I applied band aids, and patients don’t like to see nurses with band aids on their hands.”

Fortunately, a new type of “shielding” lotion is helping to provide a solution, by acting as a barrier to unwanted skin irritants and conserving the body’s own moisture. Unlike traditional moisturizers that add artificial moisture to the skin’s surface where it can wash away or rub off, shielding lotions instead bond with the outer layer of skin. This keeps moisture-robbing irritants out while locking in the skin’s natural moisture. The result: better hydrated skin. One application typically lasts for four hours or more and comes off naturally with exfoliated skin cells.

Nurses and other medical professionals are find-



Gloves In A Bottle has the advantage of binding with the outer layer of the skin and forming a protective seal to keep out harsh chemicals and keep in your natural moisture.

ing shielding lotions, such as *Gloves In A Bottle* (www.glovesinabottle.com) or *Skin MD* (www.skin-md.com) a timely and helpful alternative. Looking for relief from dry, cracked skin and painful hands, Thompson turned to *Gloves In A Bottle*, which she applies on waking, at lunch, and before going to bed.

“The product has put elasticity back in my hands,” says Thompson. “They’re not cracked or sore anymore. I don’t have to reapply moisturizer between patients. When I wash, it’s still there protecting my hands from anti-bacterial soaps, cleansers, even the latex gloves I wear. It’s non-greasy, unscented, and absorbs quickly.”

Thompson lauds the product’s restorative powers. “It provides a protective barrier not only to drying or irritating substances, but also to germs,” she says. “It helped heal my cracked fingertips and even a cut on my finger, which ‘disappeared’ after just two days.”

“Put a small amount on your hands and it stays there, so your hands aren’t miserably dry at the end of your shift,” adds Elliott. “You can go all day and your hands still feel good underneath. When you’re comfortable, you stay focused on your job and enjoy it more, rather than get distracted by irritated, itchy hands.”

Because the product has worked so well for Thompson, she gave some to her mother-in-law, who suffered from painfully dry skin as a side effect of chemotherapy and frequent handwashing with antibacterial soaps and cleansers.

“She couldn’t believe the difference,” says Thompson. “She said, ‘Feel my skin, it’s so soft. My hands and arms feel like skin again.’”

Shielding lotions such as Gloves In A Bottle are available in the US and Canada at over 9,500 pharmacies and over 3,000 specialty shops. For more info call 800-600-1881, or visit www.glovesinabottle.com. For more info on Skin MD, visit www.skin-md.com.